

Appl. No. 10/810,240
Amdt. Dated 2 May 2005
Reply to Office action of 4 February 2005

Via Facsimile no.: (703) 872-9306

Amendments to the Claims

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in this application:

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently amended) A lockable protective cap for a post having a top end and an engageable surface, the cap comprising:

a sidewall having a first end and an open second end, said sidewall forming a ~~post~~ post-receiving opening;

a cover at least partially closing said first end of said sidewall;

a locking member extending inwardly from said sidewall for engaging the engageable surface of the post, said locking member comprising a first end disposed at said sidewall, a second end disposed opposite said first end, a ramp surface disposed between said first end and said second end, and an engaging surface disposed at said second end for locking the engageable surface of the post within said post-receiving opening.

2. (Original) The cap of claim 1, wherein said cover completely encloses said first end of said sidewall.

3. (Original) The cap of claim 1, wherein said cover provides a protective lip at said first end of said sidewall for covering at least a portion of the top end of the post.

4. (Currently amended) The cap of claim 1, wherein said ramp surface of said locking member extends inwardly from said sidewall at an angle from about 40 degrees to about 50 degrees.

5. (Original) The cap of claim 1, wherein said locking member is formed by a portion of said sidewall extending inwardly into said post-receiving opening.

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6. (Original) The cap of claim 1, wherein said locking member comprises a rib.
7. (Original) The cap of claim 6, wherein said rib extends substantially around the perimeter of said post-receiving opening of said sidewall.
8. (Original) The cap of claim 1, wherein said sidewall further comprises a channel for mateably engaging a portion of the post.
9. (Original) The cap of claim 1, wherein said locking member is formed unitarily with said sidewall.
10. (Canceled)
11. (Original) The cap of claim 1, wherein at least one of said locking member and said sidewall are deformable to slide over the engageable surface of the post.
12. (Original) The cap of claim 1, wherein said locking member comprises a tab.
13. (Currently amended) The cap of claim 1, wherein said engaging surface of said locking member is ~~comprises a distal surface~~ displaced from said sidewall for engaging the engageable surface of the post.
14. (Original) The cap of claim 1, wherein a distance between an inner surface of said cover and an engaging surface of said locking member comprises a distance of at least about a center-to-center spacing between engageable surfaces of the post.
15. (Original) The cap of claim 1, wherein a distance between an inner surface of said cover and an engaging surface of said locking member comprises a distance of at least about two inches.

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16. (Original) The cap of claim 1, wherein a distance between an inner surface of said cover and an engaging surface of said locking member comprises a distance of at least about a center-to-center spacing between engageable surfaces of the post plus about the length of the engageable surface of the post.

17. (Original) The cap of claim 1, wherein a distance between an inner surface of said cover and an engaging surface of said locking member comprises a distance of at least about 2.75 inches.

18. (Original) A lockable protective cap for a post having a top end and an engageable surface, the cap comprising:

a sidewall having a first end and an open second end, said sidewall forming a post receiving opening;

a cover at least partially closing said first end of said sidewall;

a locking member extending inwardly from said sidewall for engaging the engageable surface of the post; and

a means for preventing said cap from rotating about the post.

19. (Original) The cap of claim 18, wherein said means for preventing said cap from rotating about the post comprises at least one of a channel, a slot, an opening in said sidewall, and a deformable sidewall.

20. (Original) The cap of claim 18, wherein said means for preventing said cap from rotating about the post comprises said sidewall being formed to match the shape of at least a portion of the post.

21. (Canceled)